IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-4 (Canceled).

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A decoding apparatus for executing a decoding process on a plurality of encoded information encoded with an encoding system capable of treating at least B-pictures as pictures for inter-prediction-encoding, said decoding apparatus comprising:

storage means for temporarily storing restored image information sequentially created by the decoding process and for temporarily storing the encoded information, the encoded information including a picture encoding type; and

output control means for controlling output of the restored image information stored in said storage means, wherein

said output control means, when restored image information fails to be stored in said storage means, re-outputs restored image information outputted just before the failure and ignores a decoding start time set for a first encoded information of a plurality of encoded information stored in said storage means, to start decoding prior to the decoding start time of the first encoded information, and

said output control means, when a storing order of encoded information being stored in said storage means is different from an order before the encoding, re-outputs restored image information corresponding to the encoded information having a different order.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The decoding apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein:

when a failure occurs, said output control means offsets a lag from the decoding start

time that occurred due to ignoring the decoding start time, by re-outputting restored image

information outputted just before the failure.

Claim 7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A decoding method, implemented on a decoding

apparatus, for executing a decoding process on a plurality of encoded information encoded

with an encoding system capable of at least B-pictures as pictures for inter-prediction-

encoding, said decoding method comprising:

temporarily storing each of the encoded information before the decoding, the encoded

information including a picture encoding type;

temporarily storing restored image information successively created by the decoding

process;

outputting the restored image information to be stored;

ignoring a decoding start time for a first encoded information of the plurality of

encoded information;

starting decoding of the first encoded information prior to the decoding start time of

the first encoded information; and

when restored image information fails to be stored in said storing, re-outputting

restored image information outputted just before the failure;

judging whether a storing order of each piece of the encoded information stored is

different from an order before the encoding process; and

when a judgment result indicative of a difference is obtained by said judging, re-

outputting restored image information corresponding to encoded information having a

different order.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The decoding apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein,

when the failure occurs, offsetting a lag from the decoding start time that occurred due to ignoring the decoding start time by re-outputting restored image information outputted just before the failure.

Claims 10-12 (Canceled).

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A decoding apparatus to execute a process on a plurality of encoded information encoded with an encoding system capable of treating at least B-pictures as pictures for inter-prediction-encoding, said decoding apparatus comprising:

a storage unit to temporarily store restored image information sequentially created by the decoding process and to temporarily store the encoded information, the encoded information including a picture encoding type; and

an output control unit to control output of the restored image information stored in said storage unit, said output control unit, when restored image information fails to be stored in said storage unit, re-outputs restored image information outputted just before the failure and said output control unit ignores a decoding start time set for a first encoded information of a plurality of encoded information stored in said storage unit, to start decoding prior to the decoding start time of the first encoded information, and

said output control unit, when a storing order of encoded information being stored in said storage unit is different from an order before the encoding, re-outputs restored image information corresponding to the encoded information having a different order.